

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Cross-Reference to Related Application:

This application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/032,654, filed on October 29, 2001, ^{now abandoned,} the technical disclosure of which is hereby incorporated herein by reference.

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2. Technical Field:

The present invention generally relates to containers for storing fragile food products, and more particularly, to a blow molded container for storing potato chips and/or crisps, corn based chips and/or crisps, cookies and the like which is capable of adapting to changing environmental conditions while maintaining its visual aesthetic appearance.

3. Description of the Related Art:

There are presently a great number of containers known for the storage of fragile food products (e.g., snack chips, crisps, cookies and the like). Inherent in every container's design is the requirement to compensate for or adapt to changing environmental conditions. Changes in environmental conditions (i.e., temperature, pressure and humidity) are a natural consequence of manufacturing processes. For example, dry food products are typically manufactured at elevated temperatures and thereafter hermetically sealed to protect the product from spoiling. Once sealed, a certain amount of gas is trapped within the container. As the contents of the hermetically sealed package cool to an ambient temperature, a partial vacuum is created which may cause the container to implode, distort or destroy the seal.

Changes in atmospheric pressure also affect the volume of gas trapped within a container. This is normally not a problem for dry food products because they are typically packaged in flexible packages (e.g., bags and flexible film overwraps) that can adjust their shape to changing environmental conditions. However, flexible packages